

## **Minutes of the Personnel Committee**

**Tuesday, June 15, 2004**

Chair Paulson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

### **Closed Session**

**MOTION:** Jeskewitz moved, second by B. Morris to go into closed session at 1:00 p.m. in accordance with Section 19.85 (1)(e) Wis. Stats. for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining issues associated with the AFSCME Master Unit Contract, and to approve the closed session minutes of May 4, 2004. Motion carried 6-0.

In absence of any objections, the committee went into open session at 2:34 p.m.

**Present:** Supervisors Duane Paulson (Chair), Tom Bullermann, Jim Jeskewitz, Bonnie Morris, Jeff Morris, and Bob Thelen. **Absent:** Genia Bruce.

**Also Present:** Legislative Policy Advisor Dave Krahn, Labor Relations Manager Jim Richter, Employee Benefits Administrator Pete Hans, Human Resources Assistant Mary Gutoski, Human Resources Assistant Debbie Rapp, and Employment Services Manager Sue Zastrow.

### **Educational Overview on Employee Benefits**

Hans distributed various information on the County's Benefit Program which includes health, dental, life, dependent life, sick leave, long term disability income, deferred compensation, Section 125 Program, vacation, holidays (11 paid including two "personal" days), post employment health plan, the Employee Assistance Program, funeral leave, jury duty, and financial and retirement planning programs. The two most expensive programs for the County are the health insurance and the employee retirement plan. Hans said a primary goal is to deliver the Benefit Program as efficiently as they can to control costs. He said it's important we find out what the cost drivers are, look for trends and track costs, particularly with regards to the health insurance.

Some programs are of little or no cost to the County and in some cases they produce a cost savings. This includes the Section 125 Program where employees can pay their share of the premiums (e.g., health insurance) on a pre-tax basis. Also, the Post Employment Health Plan, also known as VEBA, is rather new where the employer makes a contribution into each employee's account on a pre-tax basis. These funds are invested and later used to pay health care expenses after retirement. Hans noted that retirees pay the full premium. All salaried employees are provided this benefit but only some union employees have it because it's a negotiated benefit. Hans explained that VEBA was provided to employees to pass on some of the premium savings experienced by the County when health insurance plan design changes began deductibles and co-pays. The annual allocation, per eligible employee, is between \$200 and \$400 annually. The Employee Assistance Program offers free and confidential counseling services to employees in need of help and may refer them to mental health / substance abuse providers. The program administrator is located in Waukesha and they have done interventions for us in the past when traumatic workplace events have occurred (e.g., death of a co-worker).

The Employee Benefits Website provides employees with a wealth of educational information and interactive tools. Employees can access their health insurance companies, make changes to

their health plan, find doctors, change beneficiaries on policies, enroll electronically, etc. Hans said he hopes to expand this website in the future.

Paulson asked Hans to explain the paid vacation schedule. Hans said salaried employees have an accelerated vacation schedule compared to the represented (union) employees. This is because represented employees can earn compensatory pay whereby salaried employees cannot. The vacation schedule for a represented employee is as follows: No vacation the first year of employment; in the second year they can earn up to two weeks vacation (depending in which month they started); in the third year they receive two weeks; in the seventh year – three weeks; in the fifteenth year – four weeks; and in the 24<sup>th</sup> year an employee receives five weeks – the maximum.

Paulson asked Hans to review the health insurance deductibles and co-pays. Hans said there is a \$100 annual deductible per individual with a \$300 family maximum. Once that deductible is satisfied, the employee (or family member) pays 10% of each medical visit up to a maximum of \$800 annually per family. Hans said the County pays 90% of the monthly health insurance premium and 10% is paid by the employee. The prescription drug plan is a three-tiered plan and includes a \$10 co-pay for generic, \$15 for brand name, and \$25 for those not on the preferred drug list. Behavior health is provided in full but the benefits are capped at a certain dollar amount, per individual, per year. The vision benefit provides one eye exam per year, per family member with a \$10 co-pay for each. There is also an allowance for contacts or lenses / frames.

#### **Annual Report on the Hiring of Relatives of Current Employees**

Zastrow discussed the relative hire report as outlined. Revised copies were distributed. Between 7/1/03 and 6/11/04, nine employees were hired who had relatives already working for the County. Zastrow said relative hires are subject to her approval prior to hire.

#### **Approve Minutes of June 1, 2004**

**MOTION:** Jeskewitz moved, second by J. Morris to approve the minutes of June 1, 2004. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **Schedule Next Meeting Dates**

July 13<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Executive Committee Report**

Paulson said Senator Mary Lazich appeared at the last Executive Committee meeting to discuss state legislative issues including the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights proposal which is on hold until next year.

**MOTION:** Bullermann moved, second by Thelen to adjourn at 3:49 p.m. Motion carried 6-0.

Recorded by Mary Pedersen, Legislative Associate.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie J. Morris  
Secretary